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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Riots during Tawjihi exams

Page 2



the star's weekend magazine

Page 10

Code de la presse : les journalistes laissent courir

page 9

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star



Police arrests Syrian man behind triple murder

AMMAN (Star)—In less than 24 hours, police arrested a Syrian man who admitted to having carried out the horrific triple murder of a Syrian family earlier this week.

According to Public Security statement on Wednesday, police arrested 35-year-old Faleh Raja' El Din Jilasi, a Syrian national living in Um Utheina in Amman, who admitted to killing Jamal Abdouh Majhoub, 39, and his wife Manal, 35, whose badly stabbed bodies were discovered by Civil Defence fire fighters in their apartment near the University of Jordan on Tuesday. Police said Jilasi also admitted to kidnapping and killing the couple's two-and-a-half-year-old son.

According to the police statement, the confessed murderer admitted to visiting the victims' apartment on the night of the murder where he later slaughtered the husband with a kitchen knife and then stabbed his sleeping wife to death before setting fire to the apartment. He also admitted to kidnapping the sleeping child and later strangling him to death. Jilasi told investigators that he buried the child in a Madam farm belonging to his father in law.

He told police that he had carried out the murders as a revenge against the victim's father, with whom he had financial dealings. He said that two years ago he had commercial dealings with the victim's father and that the father owed him seven million Syrian Liras (about

Continued on page 2

US Senate backs House bill to move US embassy to Jerusalem

WASHINGTON—The US Senate overwhelmingly approved legislation Tuesday night to overhaul the US government's foreign-policy agencies and pay most of United States debt to the United Nations. But the Senate's bill and an earlier House bill call for moving the US embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, an issue which observers see running counter to administration policy, leaving its fate open to question.

Now the measure heads for a conference with the House, which earlier approved a bill with a similar proposal to merge the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the United States Information Agency into the State Department.

The House version contains no UN payment plan, however. The Senate version authorizes payment of \$819 million over three years to meet past-due obligations to the United Nations, mostly for peacekeeping assessments, on condition that the world body carries out structural reforms, cuts its budget and reduces the share of its budget charged to the United States.

The UN issue will have to be

resolved in the conference. In broad outline, the Senate version gives the Clinton administration much of what it wants on the executive branch reorganization, funding for diplomatic activities and the United Nations. "There are certainly many attractive things about the legislation the administration supports," White House press secretary Mike McCurry said. "I want to stop well short of giving a blanket endorsement of this bill, because there are certain things that we're going to have to work with Congress on."

Perhaps the most contentious, officials said, are provisions in both bills that would move the United States much closer to formal recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital despite vehement Arab objections. The provisions reflect overwhelming support in Congress for Israel, but in the administration's view constitute unwarranted interference with Middle East peace negotiations.

"Our view is that Jerusalem is the most emotional and complex issue that Israel and the Palestinians will have to deal with in the permanent status negotiations," State Department spokesman Nicholas



An old man being carried away after being hit in the head by a rubber bullet in Hebron. Following the Congress vote to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, demonstrations erupted in cities throughout the Occupied Territories

Burns said. "We do not believe it is wise for the United States or any other outside country to make an initiative on Jerusalem that in effect prejudices that issue."

Some outbreaks of violence among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza strip in recent days have been attributed to anger over what are perceived as pro-Israel votes here on the Jerusalem issue.

During House debate on the

bill, Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., senior Democrat on the International Relations committee, called the Jerusalem language "unacceptable to the administration." But Biden said that "if the president vetoes over this, I'll cast this microphone," and in fact administration officials were not threatening a veto Tuesday.

Congress and the State Department have been arguing about Jerusalem almost since Israel captured East Jerusalem from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war, annexed it and declared the city its indivisible capital. The State Department regards Jerusalem as "disputed territory," with its permanent status to be settled in negotiations, and has kept the US embassy in Tel Aviv.

The State Department also has maintained an independent consulate in what was Arab East Jerusalem. That diplomatic mission is not accredited to any country, but has long served as a de facto US embassy to the Palestinians.

Three years ago Congress ordered the embassy moved to Jerusalem by 1999, but it allowed the president to waive the provision in the national interest.

Now Congress has voted to require that the East Jerusalem consulate be made subordinate to the embassy in Tel Aviv, rather than independent. It has also voted to provide \$100 million to finance construction of an embassy in Jerusalem.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Netanyahu's zigzag policy thwarts peacemaking

By Marjorie Miller

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—During Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's first year in office, US-Israeli relations have cooled, the Palestinian peace negotiations have stalled and contacts with the Syrians have ceased. The talk of peace that prevailed under previous Labor Party governments is punctuated now by open discussion of the possibility of another Arab-Israeli war.

But what much of the world views as a dangerous state of affairs is, to Netanyahu and his right-wing supporters, a good record.

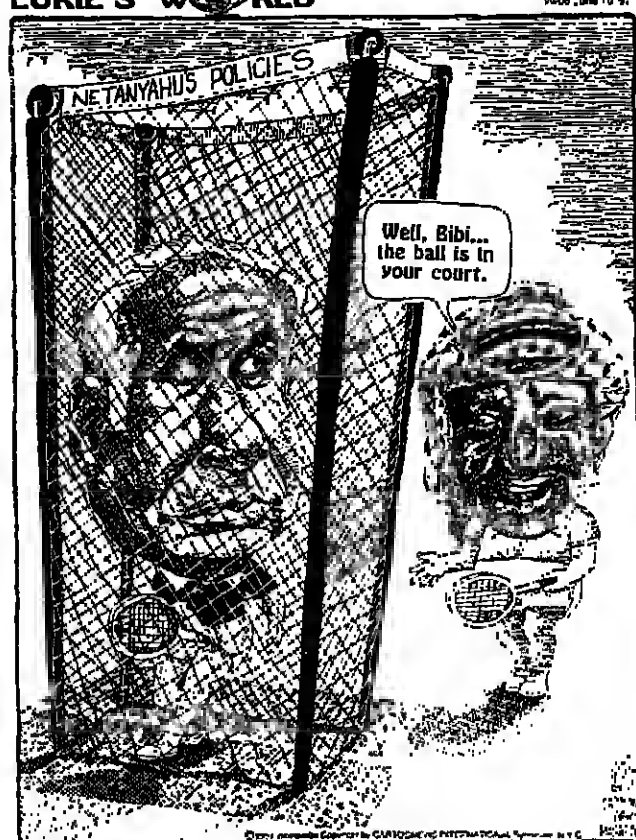
"Anyone who thought that the stopping of the mad dash to the 1967 boundaries would pass without some kind of friction was naive," Netanyahu said in an interview, summarizing his first year. "Overall, we have achieved the main targets that we set out to achieve on the fronts of peace, security and prosperity."

Netanyahu took office as Israel's first directly elected prime minister a year ago promising to slow Israeli-Arab peace-making in order to give the country "peace with security." He vowed to strengthen Jewish settlements in the West Bank, to reinforce Israel's sole claim on Jerusalem and to stand fast against establishment of a Palestinian state or return of the Golan Heights to Syria—key Arab demands for peace.

He since has continued to zigzag between fulfillment of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian accord, based on trading land for peace, and attempts to dig farther into territory Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast War. In September, he opened a new door to a tourist tunnel in Jerusalem's disputed Old City, a move that sparked Palestinian riots and armed clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police in which at least 75 Palestinians and Israelis died.

Then, in January, he signed a US-brokered agreement to hand over 80 percent of the West Bank city of Hebron to Palestinian control, earning

LURIE'S WORLD



(News Item: Despite meetings, summits and foreign intervention, Israel and the Palestinian Authority have made no breakthroughs in solving their peace crisis.)

international accolades and anger from some members of his hard-line coalition.

Netanyahu lifted a freeze on Jewish settlement construction that was declared, if not implemented, by the previous Labor government. In March, he ordered Israeli bulldozers to start work on a 6,500-unit Jewish development in traditionally Arab East Jerusalem. That resulted in a suicide bombing at a Tel Aviv cafe, the suspension of negotiations and a halt to Palestinian security cooperation.

Now he proposes to accelerate final negotiations with the Palestinians on crucial issues dividing them. But he has offered an opening position so narrow the Palestinians have dismissed it.

This pingpong policy has supporters applauding Netanyahu for fulfilling his promises.

Opponents accuse him of destroying the peace process while blaming its demise on the Arabs. Skeptics, meanwhile, say that, a year into his term, it is still impossible to decipher the intentions of their leader.

"There is a third possibility, which is that he doesn't know what he wants and is incapable of formulating a coherent strategy," said Joseph Alpher, director of the Israel-Middle East office of the American Jewish Committee in Jerusalem.

Netanyahu was elected in May 1996 with a slim majority. His popularity rating has dropped sharply to about 35 percent, reported Hanoch Smith of the Smith Research Institute in Jerusalem, one of the country's leading pollsters. That decline in support comes from both rightist and centrist voters.

Continued on page 2

Actors say new artists law may drop curtain on their careers

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer
MAHMOUD ABU GHAREEB, 74, is known in the Arab world as the father figure of Jordanian actors. With over 51 years of acting experience behind him, Abu Ghareeb appeared for the first time on stage in 1946 in Palestine. He became a familiar face for many Jordanians and Arabs through numerous TV drama series which he made for Jordan and Arab television stations.

He was a key player in establishing the Jordanian Artists Federation in 1977. Since Abu Ghareeb has reached the retirement age, he was hoping that the new Jordan Actors Association Law will reward him for his services to Jordan's drama movement in the past years, by offering him a suitable pension. But, his hopes have been dashed.

Suddenly, Abu Ghareeb finds himself outside the legal framework of the Jordanian artists movement, of which he has been a part for over 30 years. The new law, which joined together the artists and the musicians federations into one body and was ratified by the

Parliament early this year, has a controversial membership article that insists all recognized artists must be Jordanian citizens, and holders of a national number in addition to being permanent residents of the country.

This definition will deny over 25 prominent Jordanian artists, actors and actresses, directors, musicians, among others, of their right to join the association since they hold two-year passports given to those who from Gaza Strip or the West Bank) or who hold the five year passports but have no national number (given to West Bankers with yellow identity cards) or who are from other Arab nationalities but have been residing in Jordan for many years. It will also deny Jordanian artists who are living outside Jordan from the membership right.



Abu Ghareeb

The same artists were members of the federation under the old law, which required members to have a Jordanian passport, but not necessarily to be citizens, or Arab nationals who are residents in Jordan.

Abu Ghareeb, a Gazan who holds a two-year Jordanian

Continued on page 2

Legal little guys relish taking on a big Mac attack

By William D. Montalbano

LONDON—A judge's verdict deciding the longest trial in British history should come this week, but victory is already at hand for two British activists locked in a bizarre David and Goliath battle with McDonald's.

Across 313 trial days, London environmentalists Helen Steel and David Morris—with combined starting legal knowledge of zero—acted as their own defense counsel to fight off a Big Mac attack mounted by some of the slickest lawyers in the realm.

Originally expected to last a few weeks, the trial pitted the activists' assertion of the right to free speech against a corporation's right to protect itself from libelous accusation.

It has been called the biggest food fight in British history and a multimillion-dollar public relations disaster for the \$30-billion-a-year company.

Whatever the verdict now, classic underdogs Morris, an unemployed postman, and Steel, a part-time bartender, have already won the popularity stakes.

Their ants vs. elephant struggle has generated:

—A two-night, three-hour British television reconstruction, "McLibel!"

—A book, "McLibel: Burger Culture on Trial"

—And international sympathy that now includes a World Wide Web site with 19,000 pages of court transcripts already browsed by 9 million visitors (http://www.mcspotlight.org/).

Meantime, more than 2 million anti-McDonald's leaflets have been distributed in Britain and many more abroad since the legal battle was joined, say Morris and Steel.

McDonald's says it took the activists to court as a last resort and as a matter of principle: false accusations against its good name and business practices cannot go unanswered.

The McLibel case began in 1990 when the fast food giant filed libel charges against Steel and Morris for distributing a leaflet titled "What's Wrong With McDonald's?"

The activists, known by admirers as the McLibel Two, handed out the leaflet as members of London Greenpeace, the independent, environmental group that produced it. The organization has no connection with Greenpeace Ltd. of international renown.

The leaflet asserted that McDonald's destroys rain forests, flouts environmental

concerns with its packaging, sells dangerously unhealthy food, seduces children into unhealthy eating habits, exploits staff, particularly blacks and women, and is responsible for torturing animals.

McDonald's rejects all of the claims in the leaflet, which it says has been distributed in Britain and around the world since 1986. "If McDonald's did not take action to correct these lies, it would be assumed to be true and come to form part of public perception about McDonald's," said company communications director Mike Love in London.

Evidence at the trial from independent experts and employees demonstrated that, one by one, the allegations are untrue and libelous, McDonald's says. The company says it is environmentally responsible, sells food that is a valuable source of energy, advances responsibly, demands that its

suppliers respect animal welfare and offers its workers competitive pay and working conditions.

"The action was not about individuals. It was about establishing the truth," said Love. "Neither was it about freedom of speech. It was about the right to stop people distributing damaging libels."

From their scruffy north London defense office above a carpet shop, Steel and Morris, unrepentant and assertive, argue that McDonald's is not a special case but symptomatic of a destructive corporate culture.

"McDonald's is just one example—we feel that it is like the other big corporations which damage the environment and exploit workers," said Steel, now 31, a one-time gardener who says she takes home around \$100 a week tending bar.

Continued on page 2

World Report

Tawjihi exams, from nightmares to riots

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

IT'S TAWJIHI time. Last week the Tawjihi exams was on everyone's lips and no doubt it will be the talk of town for the next few weeks. From the word go, this year's exams have been beset by a series of unfortunate incidents that involved storming the classrooms, cheating and dismissals.

About 72,000 pupils are taking part in the exams that started on 9 June. During the first week students have been expressing unusual weariness.

The first day which was for the Arabic Language exam passed quietly. However,

some students did complain that the questions were unclear.

One student allegedly claimed "the questions were not taken from the textbooks that we have studied."

A group of other students in the scientific stream complained for example that the time for the "National Orientation" subject was too short. But this was rejected by one teacher.

"These are just excuses by students, it shows that they didn't really study hard enough," she added.

Another teacher from the Amman area said the timing of any exam is chosen after careful consideration by a well-organized exam committee.

Observations made by students are not of course taken seriously by teachers. It is pointed out that students have a habit of whining. But this year it seems, the course has already been set, and indeed, it goes beyond peevish complaints.

Something very grave happened on 12 June and continues to reverberate in the educational community. At the start of the English Language exam, youths stormed into three examination halls in the Yarmouk, Adib Wahba and the Salt Secondary Schools at the Balqa Governorate.

They were reported to have snatched the examina-

tion answers from the teachers supervising the examinations and tried to pass them to the students who were already setting the exams.

With sticks in their hands, they threatened supervisors and creating much chaos in the process. What ensued next was a clash with the supervisors and the breaking of glass of some windows.

The reaction of the officials at the Ministry of Education was somewhat confusing. As stated by the General Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Dr Izzat Jaradat, the English Language exam was cancelled in the halls where the riots erupted.

Dr Jaradat, who also heads the Higher Examination Committee (HEC), assured the other students who did not take part in the events, that their rights will be upheld.

He pointed out that the others who were involved were taken by police and are still being interrogated.

Minister of Education Dr Munther Al Masri stressed that the perpetrators will be severely punished. Witnesses in the examinations' halls confirmed later that the Ministry and the HEC are taking much tougher measures in these halls—through cooperation with the police—to make sure that students who only carry the registration cards are allowed to enter the halls. The Minister assured that the students are continuing their exams quietly and without any problems.

However, later reports suggested that Al Masri denied the cancellation of the English exam in the Balqa halls as some daily published earlier.



Anxious about the exams

Al Masri said that the Ministry is still studying alternatives, and the cancellation is only one option.

He stressed that the Ministry will take into consideration the rights of the students who did not take part in the riots. Sources pointed out that those students will be given another chance to sit for the English exam. However Al Masri said it is premature to confirm such a possibility for the time being. The final decision has not been made yet as further investigations are still going on.

The Ministry of Education is now trying to play down what happened in Balqa. Ministry officials are now actively involved in a PR exercise. Whenever and wherever they can, they are saying that what is important now is the psychological welfare of the Tawjihi students.

During a special meeting with the heads of the exams' halls throughout the country,

Al Masri pointed out they should now leave what happened behind them and act in a rational, objective manner for the duration of the exams.

While the talk over last week focused on what happened in Balqa, there were reports of other incidents in Tafila and Ma'an.

Students said that the English exam papers of Mohammed Abdel Aziz Al Khawaldeh, have disappeared, after the clamor that erupted after some students asked for a time extension in the Al Qadisiyah Secondary School, 29 kilometers south Tafila. However, teachers would not give in. Police were called to the scene but things had calmed down by then.

With about two weeks left to go for the rest of the Tawjihi exams, educational officials are keeping their fingers crossed and praying for a less stormy ride.



Doing his best

Netanyahu's zigzag policy thwarts peacemaking

Continued from page 1

ers—Israelis who think Netanyahu has made too many concessions to the Palestinians and those who think he is moving too slowly in peacemaking.

Much of the dissatisfaction does not have to do with the peace process but with Netanyahu's inexperience and perceived weaknesses as a leader.

Many Israelis do not fault him for opening the Old City tunnel door, for example, but with failing to understand this would enrage Palestinians and for giving the order. Israelis also say Netanyahu—widely known here by his nickname, "Bibi"—has failed to assert his power over religious and extreme-right coalition members and that his grasshopper policy is determined by competing pressure groups in his camp.

"It could be, as (former Science Minister) Benny Begin said when he resigned, that for this prime minister, a tactic is getting through the noon news. And a broad strategy is getting through the weekend news," said Alpher of the American Jewish Committee.

A majority of Israelis say they feel more secure today than they did a year ago, pollsters report, because there has been only one major terrorist

attack since the Likud Party leader assumed power—the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv's Apurro Cafe in March that killed three Israeli women.

Reuven Shamai, 27, the owner of an ice cream parlor, observed: "We suffered enough at the hands of the left government. Bibi advances Israeli interests, unlike (Shimon) Peres and (Yitzhak) Rabin, who advanced Arab interests."

But many Israelis fear that Netanyahu's hard line is leading the country to war. Hanoch Smith reported that the number of Israelis who believe war is likely has doubled in the last year from 20 percent to 40 percent. A Gallup Poll published in the daily Maariv newspaper last month showed that 56 percent of Israelis felt there was "a greater chance for war" in Netanyahu's term.

There have been no negotiations between Israel and Syria since then-Prime Minister Peres called what he believed would be a temporary halt to them in March 1996.

Peres and Rabin, his predecessor, had indicated they would trade part or all of the captured Golan Heights for a peace agreement with Syria. Netanyahu rules that out. Netanyahu says he will negotiate "without preconditions,"

but Syrian President Hafez Assad says that without the Golan, there is nothing to negotiate.

Netanyahu retains the air of supreme confidence that helped to elect him. Netanyahu's view of the stalled and suspended peace negotiations is that the Arab world is adjusting to a new Israeli government that demands reciprocity instead of "give and give." In that sense, this has been a year for lowering false Arab expectations.

Netanyahu draws a parallel between the expansion of Israel's 140 or so settlements on occupied West Bank lands and Palestinian construction in their own towns and villages that few others would accept.

Netanyahu's settlement policy has been at the root of his strained relations with President Clinton, one of Israel's staunchest supporters in recent times. The United States long has opposed Israeli settlement-building in the West Bank. Still, Netanyahu stood beside Clinton in their first meeting in Washington in July. He then embarrassed the president by vowing to expand settlements.

With the East Jerusalem building, Netanyahu forced America to twice exercise its veto at the UN Security Council against condemnations of Israel, drawing harsh criticism

from the Arab world.

Netanyahu insisted that US-Israeli relations remain strong because of shared values and common interests, saying: "There can be differences of opinion. That happens in the best of families."

The Clinton administration has decided to back away from stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks for now, letting the two sides "stew in their own juices" and allowing the Egyptians to try to restart talks.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, has formulated an opening position for final-status negotiations, and says Israelis will coalesce around his views in ways they never would have for Israel left. His plan calls for Israel to hold on to Jerusalem and surrounding settlement blocs and the Jordan Valley. The Israelis also would hold security zones between Israel and Palestinian "self-rule enclaves." But there would not be a full-fledged Palestinian state.

But the problem with this proposal, critics say, is that while it may appeal to Israelis, Palestinians dismiss it. And it is the Palestinians with whom Netanyahu must make peace.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Police arrests Syrian man behind triple murder

Continued from page 1

JD 91,000. He added that he had to sell his 14 million Syrian liras house for 9 million Syrian liras to cover his debts and decided to get even with the victim's father.

Jilasi said he arrived in Jordan in March of this year with his wife and took residence in Um Utheina district in Amman. He added that 12 days ago he met with the victim, who owns a lighting fixtures factory, and decided to kill him and kidnap his son and ask the boy's grandfather for a ransom.

The murderer told the police that he monitored the victim's movement and once he knew where he lived he bought a bottle of fruit juice and put sedative tablets in it. He then went to the victim's apartment and pretended to be paying them a social visit. He said that the wife and her son drank the

juice while her husband did not. When the wife went to the bedroom to sleep, Jilasi asked the victim to make some coffee, but the husband asked Jilasi to make it himself. In the kitchen, Jilasi took a kitchen knife and then surprised the husband and stabbed him a number of times until he was sure of his death.

He told investigators that he then moved to the bedroom where the wife was sleeping. He tied her feet and hands with an adhesive tape and when she woke up and began screaming he put a tape on her mouth and stabbed her a number of times. He then undressed her to give the impression that she was a rape victim.

He then set fire to a bed cover with the aim of destroying evidence and carried the sleeping child and left the apartment. He told investigators that

he got rid of the apartment's key and the murder weapon.

He also confessed that he strangled the boy who was making a snoring noise as he carried him from the apartment. He later put the child in a plastic bag and disposed of the body in a farm in Madam belonging to his father-in-law.

The bodies of the victims were discovered by Civil Defence fire fighters who were tipped by neighbors that a fire was raging in the victims' apartment. They found the body of the husband in the reception room. Initial coroner report indicated that he had deep incisions and cuts around his neck. In his abdomen and chest. His wife's body was found in the bedroom, her hands and feet tied together and her mouth gagged. The body was burnt beyond recognition, but had also suffered cuts with a blunt object.

Actors say new artists law may drop curtain on their careers

Continued from page 1

passport, is obviously bitter. "The new law is not the holy Koran, it is still under discussion. They must take into consideration those who served the profession for tens of years," he told The Star.

Now as the countdown begins for filling up membership applications, actors are launching a campaign against the "unjust" provisions in the new law.

Currently, the estimated 730 members of the former two federations are still technically passing through a transitional period, which might take between six to nine months. The elected council of the Artists Federation resigned since Parliament ratified the new law, and now an assigned temporary council is running the affairs of Jordanian artists until elections for the new association council are held.

"The law is clear and will be implemented as it is, particularly regarding the membership," said Anwar Al Zu'bi, who was assigned together with other three officials by the Ministry of Culture to oversee the transitional period and to call for the general assembly to meet.

According to Al Zu'bi, before the general assembly meets members they must submit their applications, and those who do not comply with the membership conditions will be excluded.

"After implementing the law, if there are any needed amendments the [coming] elected council will recommend such amendments," he maintained.

In some Arab countries, like Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon, the artists associations in these countries accepted the membership of the other Arab citizens on condition of reciprocity. However, the law of the Jordanian Artists Association does not include the reciprocity clause, but limits membership to Jordanian citizens.

"The law in its final shape is a racist one," said actress Shafiq Al Tiall, who complies with the law's membership requirement. "This is so

because it limits membership to those who have the national number and excludes those who have spent their entire professional lives in Jordan serving the Jordanian art movement."

Al Tiall added that such a law is unique in the Arab world since other Arab countries accept members regardless of their citizenships.

Prominent Jordanian actress Nadira Omran holds a five-year Jordanian passport, but has no national number because she has the "yellow card" which is given to citizens of the West Bank. She believes that the new law which does not include the reciprocity condition "will oust many Jordanian actors and actresses and directors, who are residents in Arab countries and members of their association."

"In addition to myself," Omran said, "many other actors will be out of the Jordanian artists' community, because we don't have the national number or the full citizenship, although we have served the country and satisfied the duties of citizenship."

"What will be the fate of actors like Mahmoud Abu Ghareeb, my fate and the fate of more the 25 prominent actors who really shouldered the Jordanian drama for past tens years till now," Mrs Omran asked.

She said that the issue is not about the rights of Jordanian artists of Palestinian roots, but that there is an Arab dimension as well. She said the new law will isolate Jordanian artists from their Arab medium.

Legal sources confirmed that the law will need time before it could be changed or amended. However, Mrs Omran said that "if it is difficult to change the law, then the government should give us citizenships because we are worried about our future as actors."

Legal little guys relish

Continued from page 1

but this is also about workers' rights, social issues and the environment. We are defending our right to hold these views," said Morris, now 43 and a single parent who lives on welfare.

More than 100 witnesses, ranging from senior McDonald's executives to activists and current and disgruntled former workers, testified under scrutiny from McDonald's high-starch legal team and Morris and Steel in sweaters and jeans.

"We weren't sure that we were up to it but we decided to represent ourselves after we realized there was no legal aid or representation available to us in a libel case," Morris said.

Under Draconian British libel law, the burden of proof is on the defense and not on the plaintiff, as in the United States.

McDonald's does not comment on published reports that its legal fees may top \$10 million, but British newspapers have estimated that the company's lead attorney was paid a trial fee of \$3,000 per day. Legal types Steel and Morris, after devoting four years full time to a defense supported only by voluntary contributions, have a combined annual income of around \$12,000.

"Just because they have massive resources, they cannot intimidate people to silence," said Steel.

For both campaigners, it is politics that underpins the activism. "We are anarchists in the good sense of the word. We believe in do-it-yourself politics. We believe in people having control of their lives and communities rather than having things decided for them by governments and multinational corporations," Steel said.

Judge Rodger Bell heard the case without a jury and has been weighing the evidence since eight days of closing arguments ended 13 December. If he finds for the plaintiffs this week, McDonald's also will win a court order against further distribution of the leaflet. McDonald's Love says the company does not seek damages that would bankrupt Morris and Steel and will not ask for costs.

But a finding against the McLibel Two would stand as a powerful object lesson to anti-McCrusaders everywhere.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Save up to 90 percent on long-distance calls out of Jordan: Net2Phone cuts your phone bill

THE ANSWER to expensive long-distance calls has arrived in Jordan, through Net2Phone which allows callers to contact any telephone number, anywhere in the world, through a computer.

What the caller basically needs is a personal computer (PC) equipped with sound features (sound blaster card and speakers). Once a call is initiated through a PC, it is transmitted over the Internet to the "Net2Phone Central Switch" which instantly and automatically relays the call to the destination.

The result is a full duplex voice communication between two parties. This advanced means of telecommunications eliminates the need for PC-to-PC communications provided by regular "Internet Phones".

Net2Phone incorporates the same, huge cost savings of up to 90 percent, but it offers the ability to call someone using a regular telephone unit. Examples on the rates that Net2Phone offers include 23 cents (\$ 0.23) per minute to the United States, 27 cents per minute to the United Kingdom and 66 cents to Hong Kong.

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W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Bye Bye Abd Rabbo!

■ Abd Rabbo (Slave of His God), the satirical weekly magazine, won't enlighten us any more with its mirth and sarcastic humor. Its final edition, after only 10 months, was signed, sealed and delivered last week. Its chief editor Yusef Gheishan said that the weekly wouldn't be able to operate within the confines of the new Press and Publications Law. He added that because of the satirical style of the newspaper, every one of its articles would be subject to the dictat of the law and that means heavy penalties ranging between JD 15,000 and JD 15,000. Many have been mourning the death of Abd Rabbo that is being seen the first casualty of the new press law. While there are some who are glad to see the back of Abd Rabbo, top politicians, journalists, intellectuals have been expressing their deep sorrow. Tojan Faisal, Tareq Masarwah, and Fakhri Qawar said it was an end of an era. In a eulogy in Al Rai, Qawar said "Abd Rabbo made me smile, quite simply, I became addicted to it." He said that he will miss the newspaper very much.

A diplomatic tiff

■ This time it is diplomats. Staff of the Jordanian Embassy in Tel Aviv are facing constant harassment from Israeli security forces. The latest incident occurred last week when a Jordanian diplomat crossed into Jordan. At one of the exit points he was detained and questioned for a longer period than it is appropriate for diplomats. Jordan's Ambassador in Tel Aviv, Omar Al Rifai, conformed the incident and said that the Israeli action goes against the Geneva Convention that deals with accredited members of foreign embassies. He said we did not expect such an action from a state that has relations with us.

Islamists undecided

■ It seems that the Islamists are still undecided whether to run for the coming elections or not. There are now three views within the Islamic movement according to Al Majd. The Shura Council which held a meeting last week to put an end to the debate of whether to run or not to run was itself the victim of a three way split. The first group led by Hammam Said, Mohammad Abu Faris, Saud Abu Mahfouz and Ahmad Al Kofhi said the Islamic Action Front (IAF) could not possibly run in the light of the new press law and the onslaught on political parties and professional associations. However such a view was rejected by the Overseer of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdel Majeed Thuneibat, Mohammad Abd Al Rahman and General Secretary of the Islamic Action Front, Dr Isahq Al Farhan who even threatened to resign if the council ruled against running for the elections. The most interesting trend is the third. Although a small group, it argued for a token participation in the election. However, this was voted down by the council which said that it defeated the whole object of the exercise.

Press law

■ For the second time running the extraordinary session of the general assembly of the Jordan Press Association failed to meet to discuss the new Press and Publications Law. Only seven journalists out of the 154 that are eligible to attend turned up. Observers believe that the failure to meet reflects the prevailing mood that the law is here to stay, plus the fact that the four association leaders who submitted their resignation two weeks ago have since rescinded. There are of course those who have come to believe that the new law is still better than the amendments which the JPA presented to the government.

Dakamseh referred to psychiatrist, trial continues this week, more surprises expected

AMMAN (Star)—Monday's court session, the seventh since the trial of Corp. Ahmad Al Dakamseh began, ended with a decision to refer the defendant for psychiatric examination after a prosecution witness testified that Dakamseh may be suffering from some disorders. The court also decided to hold daily sessions as of next Saturday and approved a defence request to allow the defendant to testify in his own defence.

Minutes before the end of Monday's session the military court decided to send Dakamseh, who is charged with killing seven Israelis while on military duty in Baqoura last March, for a psychiatrist evaluation.

Presiding Judge Brig. Gen. Ma'moun Al Khasawneh ordered the transfer of the defendant to undergo examination by military psychiatrists to determine whether the defendant "suffers from personality disorders or not."

Psychiatrist Major Nabil Hmoud of the King Hussein Medical Center, who examined Dakamseh two days after the 13 March incident, was standing as a witness for the prosecution. During his testimony he said that in his opinion the suspect is "mentally healthy."

However, during a cross-examination of the witness by the military prosecutor, the testimony became confusing. Maj. Al Hmoud said "Based on his past medical record, Dakamseh's medical reports



indicated that he showed signs of personal disorders and I recommend that he be examined by other psychiatrists."

The witness added that the medical record of Dakamseh stated that he was under psychological stress that led him to hysterical conditions, and he was under treatment for "disturbed personality" as far back as 1991 and that he had taken medications in the past.

Maj. Hmoud, who has been practicing psychiatry since 1988, said that during his examination of Dakamseh he showed symptoms of "introversion and had strong sexual impulses and acute temperament, and these are genetic traits with which a person is born."

The witness said that the defendant told him following the shooting incident, that for

at least eight days before the incident he was worried and couldn't sleep because he was thinking of attacking Israeli buses. Dakamseh was infuriated by the psychiatrist's testimony and shouted "He is a liar."

At the end of the court session, Military Prosecutor Lt. Col. Muhannad Hjaazi presented the court with the case file, the defendant's own confession and other evidence related to the shooting incident.

He also dropped an earlier request to invite three Israeli doctors to testify to avoid repeating testimonies since they had already participated in writing the medical report with the other doctors who has testified last week. The Military Prosecutor also asked the court to exclude another Israeli witness, the driver of the bus.

Presiding Judge Brig. Gen. Ma'moun Al Khasawneh decided to postpone the case until Saturday to hear Dakamseh's testimony and to hear defense witnesses. The court will hold daily sessions as of Saturday. The court's verdict is expected later this month.

The defendant's lawyer, Mr. Hussein Mjali, told the judges about Dakamseh's wish to testify in his own defence. "I appeal for him to be heard."

On Sunday, four Israeli witnesses for the prosecution testified before the tribunal. All four were injured in the March 13 shooting.

on 13 March in Baqoura, Dakamseh could face the death penalty.

Upon entering the courtroom on Monday, several women from his family, who were banned from attending the last two court sessions, rose to their feet and started clapping their hands and ululating.

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People & Politics

PR offensive

■ The diplomatic offensive being launched currently by His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in Europe and the United States is as important as it is timely. The King's recent visits to France and Switzerland, and the UK, heading a Jordanian business delegation, underline the special role that the King plays in promoting Jordan and defending its interests at a time when these appear to be threatened by the current stalemate in the Middle East process.



Europe, as an important partner for the countries of the region, has always stood by Jordan and supported its efforts to carry out economic reforms and development projects. This is why the King's tour of some of these countries should again bring into focus the need to redefine that support and upgrade its format to include private sector investments in this country.

The King's visit to Europe does not only serve to present Jordan's strong case as an investments destination, especially as the country undergoes important economic reforms, but also offers the King the opportunity to brief European leaders about regional issues including various aspects of the peace process and the situation in Iraq. It is hoped that Europe, as a political and economic entity, would be able to play a role in keeping the specter of war and division away from this region.

By the same token, the visit by Prince Hassan to Turkey and the United States, and his important meetings in the US capital with key US decision makers should help bring Jordan's special needs and requirements to the attention of policy makers, decision makers and business leaders. But in addition to underlining the bilateral relations, in the context of US commitment to stand by Jordan, the Prince's visit presented an opportunity to deliver Jordan's point of view with regard to political issues as well, from the latest Congress vote to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, to the Turkish military operation in Iraq, to the refugees problem and in the need to create a new concept for comprehensive security in the region.

It is hoped that with such high profile PR campaign in Europe and the United States, private capital will be moving into Jordan, which is doing a lot to put the country back on the road to economic recovery. Jordanians have taken many risks for the cause of peace and today Jordan remains an oasis of stability and rationality in a region that is still denied the reward of comprehensive and just peace.

While as Jordanians we applaud the efforts of the leadership in presenting Jordan's cause to the world, we hope that the world in return will move forward to safeguard Jordan's role and mission in this volatile region.

Partnership agreement: Tomato paste impasse

■ Jordan's partnership agreement with the EU, which was initiated only few months ago, has been sent back by the Council of Europe for further amendments. European representatives rejected the initial draft over a clause in the agreement that had to do with tomato paste exports. European and Jordanian bureaucrats will head again to the negotiating table to look into these technical details. But even if the agreement is accepted by the Council, it will have to be ratified by each member state of the EU before it finally goes into effect. So for Jordan, the benefits of the partnership are still long way ahead.



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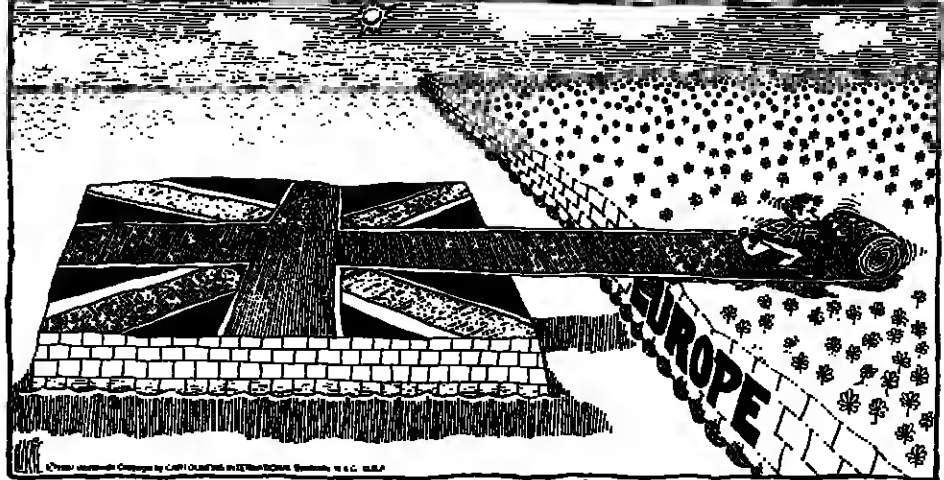
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Red Carpet Treatment

Our Say...

Congress vote: Travesty to justice

THE RECENT US Congress vote to move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is the last thing that the fledgling Middle East peace process, and the estranged interlocutors in that process, needed. While the Congress position on Jerusalem and bias in favor of the Jewish state are well-known, the timing of this latest vote could not have come at a worse time.

On the one hand, and regardless of how the Clinton administration will react to the decision, the vote gives beleaguered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his radical policies a much needed moral boost. The vote, coming from the most powerful body of legislators in the world, underlines the blind and unequivocal support of the US Congress of Israel and its policies—regardless of international laws, bilateral treaties and agreements, legal commitments and obligations.

The implications of this additional political dividend for the Israeli premier are clear. He can count on the unwavering support of US legislators for his government's policies even when he may be in disagreement with the White House over those policies. No other country in the world—and indeed no other leader, not even President Clinton himself—can pride itself in having this exclusive and unconditional backing from the US Congress.

On the other hand, the vote sends an unmistakable signal to the rest of the parties to the Middle East peace process. Regardless of the legality, or lack of it, of Israel's policies in the Occupied Territories, the Israeli government can choose at any given moment to renege on its obligations and commitments negotiated under US sponsorship, in the framework of the Middle East process—and get away with it.

The message here is that US impartiality as a mediator is as false as the declared goals of the peace process. And this is the sad reality that we find ourselves facing today. The traditional points of reference, before the launching of the peace treaty, in the form of UN resolutions and international laws, have all but dissipated. Now even the agreements signed in flashy ceremonies between Israel and the Palestinians are in danger of being engulfed by the ensuing wave of land expropriations, annexation of cities and political and economic strangulation of the Palestinian people.

The more serious outcome of this patriarchal relationship between the US Congress and Israel is that double standards have become the norm in international relations, where a country like Israel can renege on its commitments and turn its back to international resolutions without suffering the consequences. All this is happening when we as Arabs have to submit to honoring one of the most brutal sanctions regimes ever designed which is being implemented selectively against Iraq under the guise of international law.

Against this backdrop the Arabs must realize that they are fighting a losing battle. Superior fire power coupled with superior friends dictate policies, not laws and resolutions. It is indeed a travesty to justice and to the hopes of millions in this part of the world that the usurpation of Palestine and other Arab land is being condoned by a country that sits high on the mantle of justice and liberty for all.

Letters to the Editor

Compating piracy in Brazil

To The Editor,

As a regular reader of *The Star*, an experience which I enjoyed since assuming my duties as the Brazilian Ambassador to Jordan, I read the article "Pirates run rings around the authorities—Brazil responds with a shrug," by Jaurez Mazzone, in the May 1977 issue of the World Paper. I would like to bring to your attention the following measures taken in a recent meeting—end of May—by the Brazilian "National Commission on Ports Public Security." It shows the Government is taking action to prevent and combat unlawful acts in Brazilian waters:

- To encourage sea captains attacked in Brazilian waters to report such acts to the police. As in most cases, some captains, because of the time schedule, leave Brazilian ports without reporting the incident. For insurance purposes, they report to the police at a later stage. This makes it difficult for the law enforcement agencies to act.
- To expand to other Brazilian ports the successful experience of the "State Commissions of Public Security in Ports, Terminals and Naviga-

ble Waterways—CESPORTOS System." It is already enforced in Rio de Janeiro and Santos (Sao Paulo). In 1995, 11 illicit acts were reported. It dropped to eight after those Commissions started work, and in 1997, only 2 were registered.

■ The CESPORTOS is expected to be implemented in the states of Bahia (Salvador and Aratu), Parana (Paraguassu) and Amazonas (Manaus), sometime this year.

■ Coordination is being taken between the CESPORTO of Rio de Janeiro and Niteroi to extend protection to vessels in the Guanabara bay.

■ Federal Police and Law enforcement offices are being installed in all ports.

Adopting such measures to combat piracy and illicit acts in Brazilian waters show the deep concern of the government. It can be dealt with effectively by reporting the incidents to the concerned authorities.

Fernando S. Alves,
Brazilian Ambassador to Jordan

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Democratizing the Middle East

Challenges and opportunities

By Ziad K. Abdelnour

WHY HAVE the Middle East and North Africa been so inhospitable to democratic change, when much of the rest of the world seems convulsed by liberal revolutions? Many observers attribute the region's reluctance to democratize to its culture and traditions, particularly Islam. Yet the repeated demands for human rights, political liberalization and democratic government in the Arab world in the 1980s and 1990s—demands which actually yielded contested parliamentary elections in Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen—belle uniform hostility to democracy.

Clearly, a substantial number of Arab Muslims supports the adoption of democratic procedures and institutions. The resistance of most of the governments in the Middle East and North Africa to democratization is striking, however, and if a common Arab and Islamic culture cannot account for the divergent attitudes of governments and their citizens, the reluctance of these governments in the face of the support of much of the citizenry for more liberal or democratic politics must be derived elsewhere.

The argument advanced here suggests that the explanation may be found in the political economy of the region. The nature of the insertion of these states into the international political economy provides a powerful explanation of the strength of authoritarian governments and the frailty of their democratic opponents.

Many factors have contributed to the making of the political regimes of the developing world. They are partly reflections of local cultural predispositions, partly remnants of imperial impositions and partly the results of deliberate choices by domestic and international policymakers.

For most of the developing world, and particularly for the Middle East and North Africa, non-market related transactions have been very important not only in the domestic economies but also internationally.

The states of the Arab world reflect the interests and policies of the great powers of the 20th century—Great Britain and France before the Second World War and the United States and the Soviet Union thereafter. European imperialism came relatively late to the Middle East and North Africa and was characterized by a preoccupation with the geostrategic—as opposed to economic—value of the region.

To ensure low-cost access to the region and to guarantee their global strategic interests, the European powers first attempted to identify and support compliant local political authorities in protectorates of varying degrees of formality. When the regional political system collapsed with the demise of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War, the European powers reconfigured the political and economic landscape of the region, inventing new states and imposing European-style administrations, thereby creating a regional system that would secure European political interests with relatively little investment of imperial resources.

Because of the priority given to geostrategic concerns, neither the imperial powers nor their Cold War successors were motivated to invest in the region. With the exception of oil, private foreign investment was low in the 20th century. Industrialization was discouraged, and by many indicators, the Arab world lagged behind other developing states. By the final quarter of the century, the region's reliance on the industrialized countries was virtually unrequited, and the region was conspicuously absent

from the growing integration of the world economy.

In the late 1980s, the Middle East was a minor trading partner of the industrial powers (US, Europe and Japan), and if oil were factored out, export figures would fade into insignificance. Indeed, in 1989 and in 1990, just before the Gulf War, foreign investment in Malaysia alone approached that for the entire Middle East, just over \$2 billion a year.

As a result, and particularly in conjunction with the continued frailty of the domestic tax bases and the absence of multiple links with the world market, politically motivated external financing constituted an unusually large and important element in the budgets of the governments of the Arab world. Not only had the interwar mandate system favored political over economic interests in the relations of local governments with their international patrons but, during the Cold War, political criteria were routinely accorded primacy by the superpowers who competed for allies with aid, credit and concessionary trade policies.

Because of the exceptional importance of non-market related, concessional or politically motivated external financing in the Middle East after the Second World War, the regimes of the region came to participate in the international system in much the same way as managers of state-owned enterprises operate in command or socialist economies.

During much of the Cold War, the Middle East was a crucial arena of superpower competition. Like the European powers a century earlier, the US and the USSR sought to limit each other's influence in the region while expanding their own. Like their predecessors, they worked through local client regimes. As a result, many governments availed themselves of the diplomatic game of nonalignment and national-security brinkmanship to parlay the superpowers' desire for influence.

Of course, war has its costs, and in the Arab world it has been high. Military spending in the Middle East since the World War II has been higher than in any other region in the world. By the mid-1980s, the Middle East was receiving half of all arms deliveries to the Third World; the regional average spent on the military in Middle Eastern countries was between 13 and 15 percent of GNP, almost twice the rate of the next highest region, the Warsaw Pact countries.

Even after its defeat in the Gulf War, Iraq deployed 50 percent more battle tanks than Great Britain. Although the absolute cost of defense spending has been exceptionally high and the associated cost in human lives has been staggering—perhaps one million people died in the eight-year Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s—it is not clear that the opportunity cost of these expenditures has been as high as it might be supposed.

In this context, the sharp distinction between security and development implied in the traditional counterpoising of guns or butter is probably mistaken. In Syria for example, the Military Housing Establishment was the largest firm in the country by 1984, employing half of the 150,000 Syrian construction workers in building the international airport, hotels, sports complexes, schools and housing throughout the country.

In Iraq, the Military Indus-



"The solution is democracy" is just one of the many cartoons in the Arab world calling for a more pluralistic system of government

tries Commission, not only produced war materials but also oversaw the construction of bridges, roads and port facilities and sold 70 of its factories in 1988 to concentrate on "high-technology and export-oriented industries." In Egypt, the military National Service Projects Organization moved into agricultural development and land reclamation, arguing that "national security, for which the military is officially responsible, depends on 'food security,'" and soon became the country's most efficient producer of citrus, dairy and poultry products.

Finally, the region's governments learned early on not only that the potential benefits of foreign policy adventurism were high but that the constraints were soft. Failure in such apparently high-risk games was rarely fatal. From a financial perspective, war—or, military expenditure—has rarely been a dead loss in the Middle East and North Africa; spending on defense has often served as seed money, expended to attract more revenues.

If war has been used as a revenue-enhancement device, so too has peace. In 1977, for example, Sadat faced a major economic crisis as riots by tens of thousands of Egyptians prevented the regime from imposing necessary cuts in the massive food-subsidy program. Sadat correctly estimated that the better relations with the US to be won by peace with Israel would also produce badly needed financial aid. Although the economic dilemma was a serious one, Egypt may have turned to the Arab oil producers for assistance without reversing its position on relations with Israel. Yet, the Arab oil producers were demonstrably less reliable than the US—indeed, Arab aid to Egypt fell from \$1.2 billion in 1974 to \$600 million in 1976—and they imposed far more troublesome domestic conditions. The American *quid pro quo* for aid was only that Egypt come to terms with Israel, leaving Sadat a free hand at home, whereas the Arab oil producers routinely interfered in domestic politics as well as foreign policy.

And, perhaps most importantly, US aid is generous in both its financial terms and its political conditions. The Egyptian government received massive US foreign-aid increases after the signing of the Camp David peace treaty with Israel and retained a virtually completely free hand at home. As Sadat's subsequent political crackdown would demonstrate, liberal domestic policies were not necessarily a requirement for continued US aid.

That peace is seen as an effective revenue-enhancement device. On the day the donors' conference met in Washington, D.C., Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan and then Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met publicly for the first time at the

White House to announce the establishment of several committees to promote economic cooperation, while US president Bill Clinton promised that the US would work with other countries to tackle Jordan's \$16 billion foreign debt.

The role of the incumbent rulers of the states of the Arab world is amplified by the premium placed on personal political bargaining by the rules of the game they play. Because they are not operating in a formal and impersonal market, decision makers are not obliged to give much credence to the formal and impersonal institutions of the bureaucratic state and democratic polity.

It seems it is the leadership of the state and not the state itself that is the proper unit of analysis for understanding Third World foreign policy. International support of the system of judicial states that came into being at the end of the World War II created circumstances in which political entrepreneurs on the periphery, particularly in the Arab world, could draw resources from international actors—the superpowers, the oil companies, the IMF and the World Bank.

The continued flow of such resources depended on the capacity of regimes to repeatedly renew their access to international subsidies; this, in turn, periodically required the invention of novel rationales for renewed support. In the context of the prolonged regional stalemate in the Middle East, initiatives towards both war and peace have served to draw renewed attention and justify discretionary support.

For many of the regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, both war and peace have served as important devices used to garner infusions of revenues from the international system and thereby to purchase continuing political control at home. Decisions to wage war and sue for peace are pursued not as reflections of national interests or projections of national power, but rather because they may permit faltering authoritarian regimes renewed access to resources from the international system necessary to shore up their domestic positions.

Because they have so far succeeded in producing such infusions of foreign revenues, both the initiation of war and the conclusion of peace in the region have proved inimical to political liberalization and democratization. Indeed, they have allowed—and sometimes required—the incumbent authoritarian rulers to resist and repress domestic political demands.

This conclusion presents genuine and important dilemmas for policy makers, faced with hopes not only for democracy but also for a stable, peaceful and democratic world that is inexpensive to create and maintain. For the moment, peace and democracy appear to be mutually exclusive for the Palestinians; Arafat made himself the sole guarantor of a Palestinian-Israeli agreement precisely because the agreement would allow him to exercise virtually unlimited and discretionary power at home. No more than supporters of peace should be prepared to sacrifice hopes of democracy, however, should advocates of democracy oppose peace in the Middle East. To be effective, promoters of democracy must acknowledge and calculate the costs that each entails, and must begin to consider how and by whom those costs should be borne.

Ziad K. Abdelnour is an international financier based in New York and the former President of the Arab Bankers Association of North America. He is now the President and CEO of the New York-based Phoenix Group Ltd.

Middle East Beat
by
Khair Jambek
US Congress and Jerusalem

THE STORY of the US Congress about the transfer of the US embassy to Jerusalem by the end of the century, and the recognition of the city as the capital of Israel, is certainly not new. Each time the subject came up to the past, successive US administrations dealt with the issue in a rational and logical manner.

It is curious however, of the reason behind the insistence of Congress to push this point, knowing too well, that such a decision will not be acceptable by Arabs and Muslims, nor by the international community nor by Christians. Even a large segment of the Israeli population is not comfortable with the idea that seeks confrontation rather than reconciliation.

The US Congress has taken it upon itself to promote an issue, very surprisingly, that ignores the realities of the region and misconstrues the core dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict. One wonders if the honorable members of Congress are aware of the peace efforts in the region, and whether they are familiar with the shuttle diplomacy of Mr. Ross, and the efforts of President Clinton. This particular decision increases the already existing suspicion in the minds of the conspiracy theorists, embarrases the Clinton administration and attempts to compromise the status of the American role in the peace efforts in the region, as a partner in the process. Clearly, there is a lack of comprehension regarding the question of final status negotiations, if this is not the case, one can only say that there is an indifference to the issue of final status negotiations in the minds of the American legislators.

The PNA's future, and particularly that of Jerusalem, can only be decided through negotiations, and by reaching an acceptable solution by all the parties concerned. The centrality of Jerusalem in the peace negotiations, takes two different but equally important dimensions. The municipal and administrative dimension of the city is defined and decided by the negotiations between the directly involved sides—the Palestinians and Israelis. There is no relevance to other interference except in promoting goodwill, confidence, and mediation to bring together the differing points of view. However, the other important dimension, the question of the Holy Sites in the inner sanctum of the city. This is obviously an issue that concerns all the three great Abrahamic religions and their various denominations, and is not definitely, the domain and exclusive right of one party or another.

A consensus on this difficult issue, will have to include in its final analysis, the fact that there is a *de jure* recognition of a corpus separatum which by extension means, a solution which is outside the ancient Arab-Israeli conflict, and even beyond the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

To concentrate on the political or rather, the municipal aspect of Jerusalem, albeit very important, is to ignore by default, the other major problem of the sanctity of Jerusalem for the three Abrahamic faiths. From this perspective, the decision of the American Congress is a political gesture that has no relevance to the sanctity of Jerusalem, and its sole achievement is to plant more seeds of suspicion regarding the American objectives in the region, and casts doubts in the minds of the many, regarding the objective role of the US administration in the peace process.

The Clinton administration is an experienced one, and has been exerting efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East, but all its efforts are threatened by the US Congress's Trojan Horse.

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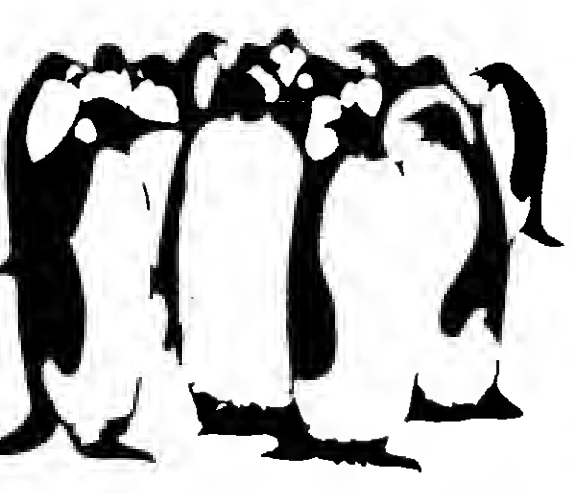
Small Price Pointer	56
Total Volume	4512
Stock Volume	1947
Traded Stocks	441572

هكذا من الدول

Netanyahu drafting proposal for West Bank partition

فلذا من الأصول

AROUND TOWN



BA, Jordan given Award For Excellence

THE BRITISH Airways' team in Amman was given the Award For Excellence award for their outstanding contribution to the region. The award was given during the British Airways' Annual Middle East and North Africa Sales Conference that was held recently in the United States. Ms Fiona Hamilton, BA manager, Jordan said, "We are proud to receive this award which came as a result of great team work at the Jordan office. She added that "this award reflects British Airways' commitment to the Jordanian market."



Guy Ferrer Signs and traces

By Anca de Maio
Special to The Star

If it had had a title, the painting exhibition by the French artist Guy Ferrer on display at the French Cultural Center would have been named "Signs and Traces." Representative of the artist's most recent work, the 20 paintings on paper and canvas express—in a varied but coherent way—two principal ideas of his whole creation: the obsession of the trace and the aspiration to universality.

Engaged for years in a permanent quest for the truths of life, Ferrer sees art as having a cognitive function. Painting, sculpture, poetry are the complementary domains of his creative investigation.

According to him, the artist is a person that has the capacity to emancipate himself from the specificity of his time. Through introspection and creation, the artist reaches far into mankind's universal subconsciousness.

Concentrating on himself, he rediscovers the great symbols common to all cultures and civilizations: the circle, the spiral, the cross, the labyrinth, the sign of the infinite, etc.

In Ferrer's opinion, it is the "trace" an artist leaves behind that will save him from anonymity and perishability. His concept of "trace" refers not only to the spiritual necessity of the artist to mark his presence in the world, but also to the primitive gesture of leaving the mark of one's hand on his surrounding environment.

The moment of creation is an act of total freedom. Any traditional instrument that might shortcircuit the passage of emotions from creator to his creation is abandoned. In stead of brushes he will spontaneously use his own palms, fingers and body.

"Codex"—a huge canvas spanning over an entire wall of the exhibition hall—is an impressive allegory of man's transit to this world on the motif of the draughtboard. Against a background of black and white squares (on which name-

less passers-by have left their foot prints), elongated silhouettes found themselves caught in the amazing swirls of an enigmatic ritual choreography.

The characters are rather suggested than represented, they are written signs than persons," comments the artist. Their hidden elements have been lost.

The rhythm is more important than the music, and the illegibility of the signs counts more than the sense of the text.

Ferrer's characters keep asking questions, but they are not able to answer them. Their destiny is inscribed in their poems, but they cannot read it.

Eyes and hands banded, they live their solitary lives kneeling and trying to recall the words of a forgotten prayer. When they stand up, their stretched figures take the shape of a dagger or of a cross. Lost in an infinite space, they cannot communicate; even when a couple turn up, their marriage is only formal.

In general, Ferrer's paintings are simple and essential. The artist applies black ink or glue on the white surface of his favourite material—paper. "I am fascinated by its fragility and strength at the same time," he says.

Sometimes he glues powder pigments and other media (zinc, stone, golden paper, oil) all over the paper and experiments on texture effects.

Gold and black are the elements of Ferrer's most important contrast. "I work on the principle of contraries and I oppose



gold—the color of divinity, to black—the color of absence," he points out.

A specialist in surprise-making, Ferrer alternates to this effect, the technique of multiple contrasts and of meaningful details. Shocking but not provocative, the French artist means to "concern" his contemplating public.

Born in 1955 in Algeria, Guy Ferrer has lived and worked in Paris since his early twenties. A tireless traveller, the Parisian artist considers himself a citizen of the planet.

By an impressive number of solo and collective exhibitions all over the world, his international recognition has become ever more important.

Enjoy touch of music at RCC

THE NATIONAL Music Conservatory is organizing an oud and guitar recital featuring Omar Munir Bashir (oud) and Ziad Awsi (guitar). The recital is on Saturday 21 June at the Royal Cultural Center.

Bashir will open the first part of the evening with improvisations on the oud. Then Awsi takes over and performs a number of guitar pieces by well known composers. In the second part, the transcendent music of the oud and the guitar will vibrate in a dialogue as the two perform famous eastern music.

Bashir was born in 1970 to a well-known Iraqi musical family. He started studying oud at the age of six at the Music and Ballet School in Baghdad. He also spent five years studying at the Institute of Iraqi Maqam in Baghdad and the resumed his studies at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary, specializing in musical compositions, and choral groups.

Bashir worked as head of the Al Birq music group in Baghdad and gave numerous solo performances as well as jointly with his father, in Iraq, France, Netherlands, Russia, Hungary, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Switzerland and Jordan.

Al Awsi was born in Baghdad in 1970. He studied music at the Music and Ballet School in Baghdad. He resumed his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts and received his BA in Piano. He is a member of the Iraqi Choral group and



has arranged and composed a number of pieces for piano and guitar. He is currently the piano and faculty member of the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad.

Tropicana, stylish restaurant at Middle East Hotel



TROPICANA IS the new stylish restaurant in town. Situated in the Middle East Hotel, it offers its visitors unique service especially during the summer time.

Tropicana, which is located at the pool side, has a distinctive atmosphere. Its romantic setting and soft music, coupled with its delicious cuisine, will almost certainly make it a hit with those wanting something distinctive and tropical for their palate.

It was opened during a special reception early this week. General Manager Waddah Abu Ghannam was there to receive the guests. Tropicana is a membership-only club.

The Pleasure Dome opens in Ahlia Abella

AS PART of its policy to expand the customer base of original videos, The Pleasure Dome opened its second branch at the Ahlia Abella Superstore last month.

The new outlet, like its predecessor, features a fully computerized operation to facilitate selling and rental of more than 500 original video titles—going up to nearly 800 in July.

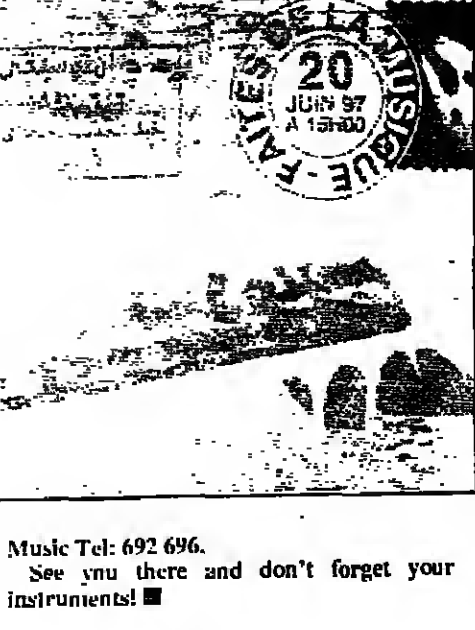
Being the first and only entirely original video and audio operation, and drawing on the success it has been enjoying among customers who never have to complain about the lack of quality suffered from pirated videos—The Pleasure Dome will open two new outlets in another locations in Amman soon.



All on board the music train !

CELEBRATE MUSIC Day on board the famous Hejaz steam train! This is what the French Cultural Centre and Freddy for Music are inviting you to do on Friday, 20 June (departure: 3 pm from Amman railway station (Mabatta), return: 10 pm).

All kinds of music will be performed throughout the journey both on board by the passengers and at the different stops (Khirbet Al Samra and Muftah). A special venue will be held at Muftah. Tickets are sold now for JD 10 inclusive of trip music and snack. They are available at the French Cultural Centre Tel: 637009/639445 and Freddy for Music Tel: 692 696. See you there and don't forget your instruments!

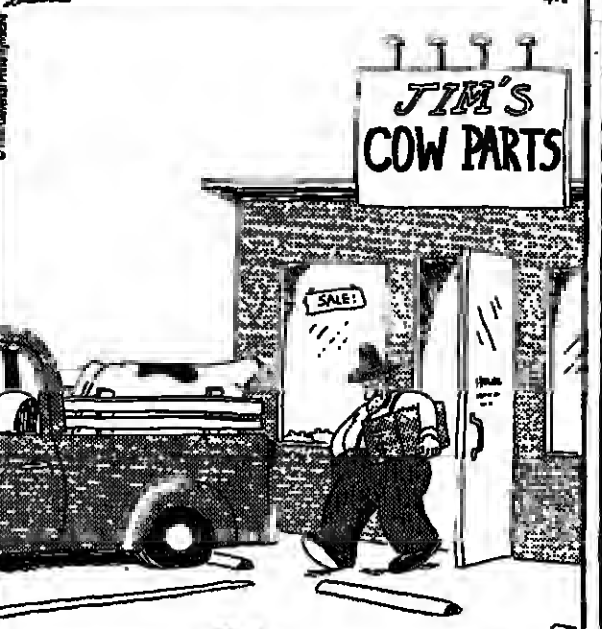


THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"LASSIE... COME HOME!... LASSIE COME HOME!"



Medieval chicken coops

AGENDA

- Exhibitions**
 - "The Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition" showing the works of more than 60 artists from the Arab world, continues at Darat al Funun till 24 July.
 - The artworks of the Jordanian artist Farouk Lambaz continues at Darat al Funun ends today, Thursday 19 June.
 - Artworks by nine contemporary Iraqi artists, entitled "Ecology & Environment in the Iraqi Art", at the Royal Society of Fine Arts, runs till 12 July.
 - The artworks of the French artist Guy Ferrer continues at the French Cultural Center, ends today, Thursday, 19 June.
 - Spring Exhibition of Plastic Art '97 at Greater Amman Municipality runs till 30 June.
 - The artworks of Farouk Lambaz continues at Darat al Funun till June 19.
 - Artists' book exhibition entitled "One of a Kind" continues at the American Center till 30 June.
 - Photo exhibition of Hong Kong, sponsored by the Chinese Embassy, at the Royal Cultural Center, runs till 19 June.
- Films**
 - Jeremiah Johnson at the American Center, Thursday 19 June at 5:00 pm.
 - Une histoire simple at the French Cultural Center, Monday 23 June at 8:30pm.

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 21-27 June

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:00—Gillette World Sport Special
4:30—Innovation
4:50—Tilt
5:15—Blue Healers
6:00—French Programs
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hangin' with Mr. Cooper
8:00—Magazine Zero One
8:30—Prism
9:10—Time Trax
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—McGyver
11:05—Football Match

SUNDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—French Programs
4:05—Global Family
4:30—Energy Express
4:50—Our world
5:15—American Chart Show
6:10—French Programs
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:00—Cinema. Cinema
8:30—The Churchills
9:10—Renegade
10:00—Football Match
12:00—One West Waikiki

MONDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:40—Spirou
4:05—Neighbors
4:30—In the Wild



Drug Wars, Tuesday at 11:15 pm

5:00—Tilt
5:30—Blue Healers
6:10—French Programs
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Murphy Brown
8:00—Discover Magazine
(Doc.)
8:30—Murder She Wrote
9:10—Highlander
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—The Write Verdict
11:15—Homicide

TUESDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—Football Match
5:00—Square One
5:10—The Album Show
6:10—French Programs
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines

7:35—Coach (Comedy)
8:00—Tilt
8:30—Encounter
9:10—Nature of Things
(Doc.)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—West Beach
11:15—Drug Wars

WEDNESDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—Football Match
5:30—Bordertown
6:00—French Programs
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Grace Under Fire
(Comedy)
8:30—Soldier's Diary
8:30—Challenges (Local talk show)
9:10—Spencer for Hire

(Drama)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Land's End
11:15—American Gothic

THURSDAY
3:30—Holy Koran
3:35—Football Match
5:00—French Programs
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Step by Step
8:00—World Echo
8:30—The Oprah Winfrey
(New Talk Show)
9:10—Kung Fu
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Feature Film:
TThompson's Last Run

FRIDAY
3:00—Holy Koran

3:05—Leo the Lion
(Cartoon)
3:30—Wish Bone
4:05—Neighbors
4:30—Winners Down Under
5:15—Varieties
5:30—French Film
7:00—French News
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Family Matters
8:00—The Health Show
8:30—Hawkeye (Drama)
9:10—500 Nations
10:00—News at Ten
10:30—Mini Series
12:00—NBA Games

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

SAMEDI
3:30—Dessins animés
Arsène Lupin
6:00—Série policière
Sueurs froides
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
L'œuf de Colomb

DIMANCHE
3:30—Dessins animés
Arsène Lupin
6:00—Magazine
Faut pas rêver
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine
Ziva

LUNDI
3:30—Dessins animés
Arsène Lupin
6:00—Documentaire
Pigave
7:00—Le Journal
7:15—Magazine scientifique
Cinq sur cinq

Highlight of the week at the Pleasure Dome

● **A Time To Kill:** "One of the Year's Most Powerful Films!"
Superbly Acted and Extremely Compelling.
Jeffrey Lyons, "Sneak Previews/TABC World New Now"
Ellen Roark (SANDRA BULLOCK), an energetic, ambitious and razor-sharp Boston-born law student at "Ole Miss," determined to assist Jake (MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY) in the legal proceedings, drawn to the case ... and to Jake himself ... without recognizing the risks inherent in both.
The trial of Carl Lee Hailey (SAMUEL L. JACKSON) sparks a cauldron of conflicting emotions from a kaleidoscopic range of Mississippians - white and black, poor and privileged, Klan members desperate to regenerate their dying "glory," civil rights activists anxious to keep their cause moving forward - a microcosm of a unique place in the American landscape where time is no longer standing still.
As fake fights to defend Carl Lee, his own life and the safety of his family and colleagues become increasingly jeopardized. And now, as a full-scale on-again off-again summer just below the surface and threatens to explode in this small, Southern community, Jake and Carl Lee must find a way to transcend their fundamental differences and work together for the same cause ... equal justice.



Video Releases

Superior Releases from Warner Brothers!

■ **Surviving Picasso:** The amazing story of the even more amazing character. Starring Sir Anthony Hopkins as Pablo Picasso, the film depicts the charismatic and passionate life of this genius and the women spell-bound by him.

■ **Michael Collins:** The tale of the patriot whose bravery and unswerving dedication to the Irish people changed history as it made him into a legend. Liam Neeson, Stephen Rea, Aidan Quinn, Alan Rickman, and the formidable Julia Roberts prove in a fire proof manner their abilities in this moving feature.

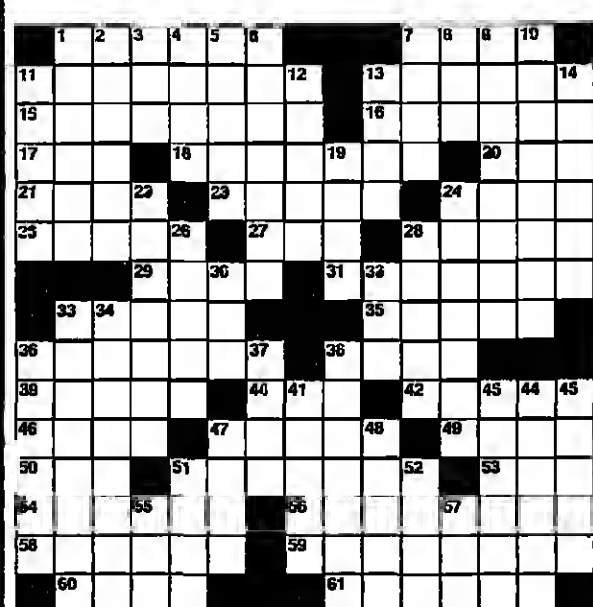
■ **The Glimmer Man:** The desperate hunt for a serial killer has just gotten tougher for lapd homicide detectives Cole and Campbell; they've become partners! This searing thriller starring Steven Seagal and Keenan Ivory Wayans promises packs of action and wits.

■ **Ti Cup:** Kevin Costner is back again in a big way! If you thought that Golf and Golfers are boring, then this film will change your mind; Costner and Rene Russo get involved in a clever full of laughs battle of the sexes ... a must see. Directed by Ron Shelton (Bull Durham, white men can't jump).

Courtesy: "The Pleasure Dome"
Tel: 676558 - Fax: 5538087

Programs are subject to change by JTV

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Building
7 Skidded
11 Wake
13 Keyless, in music
15 Furthest
16 Florentine painter
17 Edge
18 Fraternal order member
20 Sunbeam
21 Indigo
23 Stage
24 Havana's island
25 Implied but unspoken
27 Do — say...
28 Military award
29 Anthracite
31 Elea, for one

DOWN
2 Not hidden
3 — Dame
36 Pressman
38 Neighbor of Brazil
39 Solution
40 Soul
42 Turn inside out
46 Arch
47 Zenana
49 Unmatched thing
50 — Ben
51 Emerald
53 JFK's predecessor
54 Paint
56 Stable points
58 Unusual thing
59 Accomplish
60 Lovett or Waggoner
61 Kind of bicycle

24 Brazilian coin
26 Rich cake
28 Mary or Marianne
30 Had a bite
32 — quinary
33 Not copied
34 Sour
36 Investigator
37 Cry of a wild animal
38 Foretell
41 Place of contest
43 Scaled plant
44 Rescue from sin
45 Long lock
47 Sacred
48 Coffee variety
51 — noise
52 Chicken show
55 Armed forces: abbr.
57 Actor
Danson

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—THIS WEEK'S— HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: If you're into philosophical discussions, they'll be easy to find.

Aries (March 21-April 19). A change could be to your advantage. Travel conflicts with your work. You can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Listen to your partner but make your own decisions. Call in old debts and pay your own.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Your workload's horrendous. Finish up and you can go on an adventure. You're in the spotlight, but not to worry. You've rehearsed the part.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). You're lucky in love. Make your commitment. Work hard to finish an old assignment.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Stay home as much as possible and play with your friends. You hereby have astrological permission.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Stay on course even in the face of erratic commands from an older person. The pressure you've been under lately eases soon.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Concentrate on making money and collecting old debts. Put a down payment on travel. Watch out for a hindling insight.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You're awesome, but there are complications. Watch what you say. Invest money in communications. Start finishing an old assignment, even if it will take a while.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Don't huckle under the pressure. Dispense information on a "need to know" basis. You'll get much stronger and wittier.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). Don't let friends distract you from your work. You'll be under pressure to get a big assignment done. The moon's in your sign.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Stand firm with an older person. Explain very carefully so he or she can understand.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). You'd like to travel, but you probably have to stay home. At least run errands. Expect everything you've planned to change.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: You have to work hard this year, but it's time well spent. You're gaining security. You and your partner have great fun, and push each other to try new things.

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Bridge

East-West vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH
♠ A 7 4
♥ A Q J
♦ A Q 9 8
♣ A J 6

WEST
♠ J 5 2
♥ 10 6 2
♦ 6 3 2
♣ Q 10 9 4

EAST
♠ K 10 6 3
♥ K 9 8 5 3
♦ 10 4
♣ K 3

SOUTH
♠ A 9 8
♥ 7 4
♦ K J 7 5
♣ 8 7 5 2

The bidding:
East South West North
Pass Pass Pass 10
DBI INT Pass 3NT
Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♠
It is impossible to overstate the value of spotcards. This hand, from the 1964 Polish Junior Mixed Pairs event, illustrates this phenomenon.

North was a whit short of a two-no-trump opening bid. East tried to get both major suits into the auction with the takeout double, but South's one no trump served its purpose, shutting West out. North's jump to game would pass the most rigorous scrutiny.

West found the inspired lead of a

low heart. East captured the jack with the king and continued the suit to the queen. There were eight fast tricks, and the obvious try for a ninth, a spade to the queen, was almost surely doomed — East's takeout double surely placed that defender with the king.

Declarer decided that the club suit offered a more promising source for a ninth trick. Not only might the suit be developed for an extra trick, but there was also the possibility of an endplay.

After crossing to band with the jack of diamonds, declarer led a low club. Had West followed low, declarer intended inserting the six. As the cards lie, that would have forced the king and a finesse of the jack next would have produced the fulfilling trick. West put in the nine, however, but that proved no better.

Dummy's jack lost to the king, and the heart suit was cleared. Declarer came to hand with the king of diamonds to lead another club, and West was forced to insert the ten, taken by the ace. The club six forced out the queen, and declarer's eight of clubs was now established, while the ace of spades served as the entry to enjoy the winner.

Double dummy, it is easy to make game on other lines, but would you have done so at the table?

Michigan ranks first among the states in snowmobile registration. Minnesota is second.

Horse racing is known as the "sport of kings" because of monarchs' fondness for it as a diversion.

Shakespeare was the one who coined the phrase "green-eyed monster" to describe a fit of jealousy.

About 70 Minutemen fought at the Battle of Lexington in the American Revolution.

Speaking of the early days, George Washington gave out America's first Purple Heart for bravery during that conflict.

Bing Crosby's first name was really Harry before he changed it. Somehow Harry doesn't have the ring of Bing.

Jumble

Unscramble these four words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WETET

APLLE

COIBED

SNAMEA

Answer here: _____

Answers: WETET: TWEET; APLLE: LABEL; COIBED: BODICE; SNAMEA: SEAMAN



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers: WETET: TWEET; APLLE: LABEL; COIBED: BODICE; SNAMEA: SEAMAN

Would You Believe...

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The Lion King's Timon & Pumbaa joins the Orbit network

STRAIGHT FROM the plains of Africa to households throughout the Arab world come two of the funniest animals to ever grace the motion picture screen.

The quick-witted, fast-talking Meerkat, Timon, and the wonderful, warmhearted warthog Pumbaa, who made overnight sensation in Walt Disney's "The Lion King," now join the Orbit Network straight from the Serengeti in their very own weekly animated series, The Lion King's Timon & Pumbaa, premiering June 30 at 9:00 am GMT exclusively on The Disney Channel, part of the Orbit Satellite Television and Radio Network.

Venturing beyond the pridelands they call home in search of amazing adventures and unforgettable friends, Timon and Pumbaa take Orbit viewers on a weekly rollercoaster of fun and excitement using slapstick comedy to convey life lessons to younger and older viewers alike.

Life becomes a bowl of cherries (or in their case, a bowl of huggs) as Timon and Pumbaa live their days by the phrase they made famous—"Hakuna Matata!"—meaning "no worries." Follow these two fun-loving characters as they spend each episode going wherever the living is easy, the bugs are juicy and the gags are non-stop.

But the fun for these two doesn't end on the African continent. They take their "act" on the road, searching for anything that can make them laugh from outrageous situations to outrageous new friends. Audiences can also catch these two "hoofers" in featured music videos showcasing their singing and dancing talents.

Timon and Pumbaa follow a long tradition of buddy comedies—Timon himself puts it best: "Abbot and Costello ... Hope and Crosby ... Martin and Lewis ... Timon and Pumbaa!"

Or, maybe just a little bit of the fun of the original film, "The Lion King," which won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film in 1994.

The National Music Conservatory presents Omar Munir Bashir (oud) and Ziad Awsi (guitar)

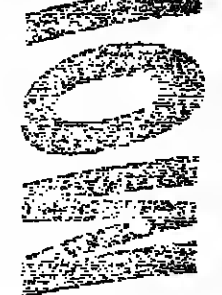
Saturday 21 June 1997, 8:00 p.m.
The Royal Cultural Center - Main Theatre
The program features famous pieces written for oud and guitar.



Ticket price: JD 5

Tickets available at: Al-Farooq, Superstore, Tel. 684831; Music Box, Tel. 616718; Al-Farooq, Tel. 5327999; Philadelphia Book Gallery, Tel. 6515601; Al-Farooq, Tel. 647858; Galaxy, Tel. 653111; Bay Street, Tel. 61522; The Royal Cultural Center, Tel. 65024; Café Mena, Tel. 656455; The National Music Conservatory, Tel. 657620

SECON



Il a fallu

Le jour où...

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Le jour où...

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Sinead O'Connor, menacée de mort à Jérusalem

La chanteuse de rock irlandaise Sinead O'Connor a annulé son concert pour la paix, à Jérusalem, après avoir reçu des menaces de mort. Ce concert prévu samedi était au programme d'une semaine culturelle sur le thème : «Partager Jérusalem, deux capitales pour deux États». Une semaine d'expositions et autres manifestations préparée par l'organisation «Jerusalem Link» qui regroupe des Israéliennes et des Palestiniennes. Un activiste israélien d'extrême-droite, Itamar Ben Gvir, membre du groupuscule «Front idéologique», a indiqué à la radio militaire qu'il avait participé à des «actions» pour empêcher la venue de Sinead O'Connor. «C'est en grande partie grâce à notre intervention que le concert a été annulé», a-t-il ajouté sans donner d'autres détails. Le «Front idéologique» a pris la succession du «Kach», un parti raciste anti-arabe mis hors la loi après le meurtre de 29 Palestiniens par un colon israélien à Hébron en 1994. Daphnan Golani, une des organisatrices israéliennes, s'est dit «désolée» de l'annulation du concert. Elle a dénoncé «l'atmosphère de menaces qui prévaut à Jérusalem depuis l'assassinat de Yitzhak Rabin (en novembre 1995) contre tous les artistes favorables à une coexistence pacifique entre Israéliens et Palestiniens». Selon elle, le concert de Sinead O'Connor s'annonçait comme un succès avec 2000 billets vendus en trois jours.

Le Jourdain prépare un supplément pour son édition du 10 juillet à l'occasion de la fête nationale française. Une place spéciale vous est réservée dans ces 4 pages consacrées à la présence française en Jordanie. Profitez donc de cette vitrine publicitaire pour votre entreprise. Pour tous renseignements, contactez Yannick Lainé ou Mahmoud Fares au 645 380 ou au 652 380.

SELON MOI

Il a fallu attendre une déclaration du ministre de l'Intérieur assurant que le gouvernement ne comptait pas revoir le statut des associations professionnelles pour calmer la tension qui régnait dans le pays la semaine dernière. Quelques jours auparavant, un quotidien avait en effet publié un article annonçant une révision prochaine de ce statut.

Le conflit qui oppose depuis des années associations professionnelles et pouvoir exécutif avait connu un tournant avec l'annonce du processus démocratique en 1989. Depuis, le pouvoir ne cesse de rappeler à l'ordre ces associations lorsque les différends politiques deviennent trop importants.

Le statut particulier de ces associations est à l'origine de cette problématique. Pour défendre les intérêts moraux et matériels de leurs membres, ces associations jouissent d'un statut de poids : l'adhésion obligatoire. Par conséquent, ces organisations sont gigantesques, comptant des dizaines de milliers de membres, alors que quelques centaines, voire quelques milliers seulement, participent réellement à la vie de ces associations.

Le problème qui se pose de nos jours est dû au lourd héritage politique de ces organisations. Un héritage qui bloque toute tentative de réforme interne. En effet, les syndicats jordaniens, qui forment le noyau des couches moyennes dans le pays, ont joué au nom de toute la société civile un rôle décisif dans la défense des libertés démocratiques pendant trente ans, durant toute la période de la loi martiale. Le conflit israélo-arabe, le soutien à la cause palestinienne et les questions pan-arabes faisaient partie de leurs agendas. Un ordre du jour qui leur confère une place prépondérante dans la vie politique jordannienne.

Or, malgré l'autorisation des partis politiques à partir de 1992 et les autres acquis démocratiques, ces associations ont tendance à vouloir jouer le même rôle qu'autrefois. Pourtant, beaucoup de membres insistent aujourd'hui sur la nécessité de réformer ces associations selon des principes plus démocratiques et professionnels, et de rééquilibrer l'action politique de ces associations. Certains souhaitent en effet que le rôle professionnel prenne désormais le pas sur les activités politiques. Si elles sont légitimes, ces revendications n'ont cependant que peu de chances d'être entendues actuellement. Car pour beaucoup, ces réformes feraient trop le jeu du gouvernement qui souhaite lui aussi voir ces associations se concentrer davantage sur leur mission initiale.

Hussein Abu-Rumman

Le Jourdain, on y revient. Tous les jeudis dans le Star 645 380

Code de la presse

Les journalistes laissent courir

Des organisations internationales écrivent au roi pour lui demander d'abroger la loi provisoire sur la presse et les publications. Pendant ce temps, les membres du syndicat des journalistes jordaniens montrent peu d'intérêt pour se réunir et combattre cette loi liberticide.

Vendredi dernier.

Une assemblée générale du Syndicat des journalistes jordaniens (SJJ) était prévue : sept membres sur 154 sont venus ! Un chiffre insuffisant. Le président du syndicat a dû annuler la réunion comme il l'avait fait

une semaine auparavant. La déclaration du roi Hussein, selon laquelle «il n'est pas question de revenir sur cette loi», explique en partie ce découragement. D'autre part, les présidents de cinq associations professionnelles sont revenus cette semaine sur leurs démis-

sions, décidées pourtant il y a un mois pour protester contre le nouveau code de la presse. Du coup, beaucoup de journalistes ont estimé qu'une réunion n'était plus nécessaire et que, de toute façon, elle ne servirait pas à grand-chose.

En réalité, le syndicat des

journalistes ne s'est pas montré très actif pour défendre les droits et les intérêts de ses membres et encore moins la liberté d'expression. Le SJJ, par exemple, n'a rien fait pour soutenir Fahd Rimawi, le rédacteur en chef de l'hebdomadaire al-Majid (tendance nationaliste), victime d'une agression physique et morale dans un centre de sécurité. Si on remonte aux années 80, le syndicat n'a jamais réussi à percevoir, sur les recettes publicitaires des journaux, les 1%, pourtant prévus par les statuts de l'association professionnelle des journalistes.

Trois issues possibles

Pronuée en 1981 sous les auspices d'Adnan Abou Odeh, ministre de l'Information très porté sur les questions de sécurité, cette loi a servi de filtre pour mieux introduire dans le SJJ des journalistes proches du pouvoir.

Tout d'abord, patrons des quotidiens et simples journalistes cohabitent dans le même syndicat. Ensuite ne peut exercer le métier de journaliste que celui qui obtient la carte du SJJ. Et pour cela il faut passer deux ans en «formation». C'est ainsi que des journalistes jordaniens qui dirigeaient des publications dans les pays du Golfe (en particulier le Koweït), ont dû faire leurs deux ans de

«formation» à leur retour au pays en 1991. Simplement pour être reconnus en tant que journalistes et obtenir la carte du syndicat. Bref, le syndicat des journalistes jordaniens a été conçu dès le départ pour être docile aux décisions gouvernementales.

Les journalistes des hebdomas et ceux qui sont venus de l'étranger ces dernières années ont apporté du sang neuf mais pas de quoi changer les orientations et le fonctionnement du syndicat. Pour l'instant, les éditeurs-majors des hebdomas sont très préoccupés ces jours-ci par leur avenir. Ils se concentrent pour s'adapter à la nouvelle loi qui entrera en vigueur le 15 août prochain. «Par principe, nous nous opposons à cette loi et nous espérons que la chambre des députés la rejettera au moment venu. Mais d'ici là, nous devons en tenir compte et nous préparer à l'échéance du mois d'août», affirment-ils.

Les rédacteurs en chef envisagent trois issues possibles : la fusion de certains hebdomas afin de collecter la somme nécessaire pour être autorisé à publier, la parution à l'étranger ou la disparition pure et simple, comme l'a choisi Abed Rabbo.

Suleiman Sweiss

Abed Rabbo, première victime du nouveau code

L'hebdomadaire satirique a publié samedi son dernier numéro. Les administrateurs du journal ont décidé de fermer pour ne pas risquer de payer les trop lourdes amendes imposées par la nouvelle loi sur la presse et les publications. Sur la couverture, le titre : «Son sang sera sur vos mains à jamais» évoque la masquée d'Abed Rabbo, poignardée dans le cou.

En bas, on peut lire : «Les félicitations sont à adresser au siège du Premier ministre». Combien de publications suivront Abed Rabbo ? Les hebdomadaires Tarik al-Moustakbal, Chihan et Sayr al-Mara pensent pouvoir remplir «sans problèmes» les conditions exigées par la nouvelle loi. De leur côté, al-Majid, al-Bilad et encore Sayr al-Mara ont demandé au président de l'Ordre des avocats de porter plainte auprès de la Cour Suprême contre la loi provisoire.



Education

Les écoles se mettent au DELF

Pour la première fois cette année, le Diplôme Élémentaire de Langue Française (DELF) a été proposé dans plusieurs écoles privées jordaniennes. Ce diplôme reconnu en France offre à beaucoup de jeunes une chance supplémentaire de faire des études dans l'hexagone.

Ils sont étudiants et tous

passionnés de langue et de civilisation françaises. Cette semaine, ils se sont retrouvés au Centre culturel français et de coopération linguistique d'Amman (CCCL) pour passer la deuxième partie du DELF, un diplôme reconnu par le Ministère français de l'Éducation.

Composé de six unités indépendantes, qui se regroupent en deux parties, le DELF permet une bonne évaluation des compétences en français (expression, compréhension, grammaire, civilisation). Avec un examen réussi, une unité est acquise à vie. Les examens ratés peuvent être repassés dans n'importe quel centre culturel français dans le monde et à n'importe quel moment.

Plus de 900 élèves

Correspondant à un niveau de langue intermédiaire, le premier degré du DELF (quatre unités) a été étendu à certains établissements scolaires privés jordaniens. Il remplace à partir de cette année les attestations de langue (certificat et brevet), sans valeur réelle, qui étaient délivrées par les services de l'Ambassade de France.

Plus de 900 élèves ont passé la première partie des épreuves du DELF qui ont mobilisé plus de 80 professeurs jordaniens et 20 pour les épreuves écrites et 20 pour les épreuves orales. Le DELF implique une grosse organisation, c'est pourquoi il n'a été introduit que dans trois ou quatre pays seulement.

«Pour l'année prochaine, d'autres écoles ont annoncé

leur participation et l'ampleur

de l'événement demandera une organisation encore plus rigoureuse», annonce Gregory Delatre, professeur de français au Centre culturel et organisateur des deux sessions DELF de cette année.

Près de 85% des élèves ont réussi les examens. Les quatre meilleurs ont été récompensés par un séjour en France. Beaucoup plus tard des études de degré du diplôme en poche, ils ont tenté cette semaine d'obtenir l'intégralité du diplôme au Centre culturel français.

Etudier en France

Dans la perspective d'éventuelles études en France, ils espèrent aussi obtenir le Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française (DALF), un document officiel qui leur donne libre accès à toutes les universités françaises.

Hadeel Osous, 17 ans, du Collège Rosaire-Schmeisani, veut faire des études de médecine ou de pharmacie. Avec l'intégralité du DELF, elle espère pouvoir trouver une entreprise pharmaceutique franco-jordannienne.

Dania Sweldan n'a que 16 ans mais semble déjà très déterminée. Elle a suivi le cours intensif proposé d'une manière facultative par le CCCL aux candidats du deuxième degré du DELF et a l'intention de se présenter aux examens du DALF. «J'aimerais étudier la médecine dans une université française, mais pour cela je dois obtenir une bourse, sans laquelle ce sera difficile», con-



Grâce au DALF, les étudiants jordaniens ont la possibilité d'aller étudier dans une université française.

Anca de Malo

Processus de paix

Vers l'Intifada?

Les affrontements de l'autre côté du Jourdain se multiplient. Et la reprise des négociations s'éloigne encore un peu plus.

Le risque de

guerre n'a jamais été aussi proche qu'aujourd'hui depuis le début du processus de paix israélo-arabe (Madrid 1991) ou israélo-palestinien (Oslo 1993). Ce pessimisme ne vient pas seulement des Palestiniens qui voient les chars et les forces israéliennes se rapprocher de leurs enclaves et se préparer pour occuper à nouveau les villes palestiniennes libérées. Les Israéliens eux aussi sont de plus en plus inquiets. Selon Oren Shoham, l'ancien chef d'Etat-major de l'armée israélienne, la politique de Netanyahou a provoqué la disparition de la confiance palestinienne et donc l'arrêt du processus de paix.

«Si cette situation perdure, je m'attends aux vents de la guerre et je crois que nous aurons à faire à une violente Intifada armée», prévient-il. Et ce qui se passe depuis quelques jours à Hébron avec les affrontements répétés entre les forces israéliennes et les citoyens palestiniens pourrait en être le prélude.

Nabil Shaat, ministre pales-

tinien du Plan et de la Coopération internationale, estime qu'Israël mène une campagne militaire sur l'ensemble des territoires palestiniens et menace ainsi ce qui reste du processus de paix. Il n'a pas caché son amertume face aux Etats-Unis qui «pourrait convaincre du danger de la colonisation en Cisjordanie ne font rien pour l'arrêter». Le ministre palestinien s'en est pris aussi à la décision du Congrès américain de transférer l'ambassade des Etats-Unis de Tel-Aviv à Jérusalem. Il l'a qualifiée d'«injuste, dangereuse et injustifiable puisqu'elle est contraire à la légalité internationale».

Pour sortir de l'impasse, Nabil Shaat n'exclut aucune possibilité mais il précise que l'autorité palestinienne condamne toute action militaire contre les civils israéliens. En attendant, le ministre palestinien veut croire à la médiation égyptienne et à une éventuelle action des Européens.

De Gaza, Hassan Balawi



Un soldat israélien interpelle un jeune manifestant palestinien lundi à Hébron

Colloque

La Jordanie étudiée à Paris

Dans le cadre de la saison jordanienne qui se déroule actuellement en France, un colloque s'intéressant à l'histoire contemporaine du royaume hachémite s'ouvrira mardi à l'Institut du monde arabe.

En marge des manifestations

culturelles prévues dans le cadre de la saison jordanienne, une présentation politique de la Jordanie aura lieu cette semaine à Paris au cours d'un colloque scientifique organisé par le Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Moyen-Orient Contemporain (Cermoc). Depuis plusieurs années, Riccardo Bocco, secrétaire scientifique du Cermoc à Amman, réfléchissait au moyen de réaliser un ouvrage complet sur l'histoire contemporaine de la Jordanie. Or, celui-ci verra le jour quelques mois après le colloque «Politique et Etat en Jordanie/1946-1996» qui aura lieu mardi et mercredi à l'Institut du monde arabe. Cet ouvrage rassemblera à la fois les travaux de nombreux chercheurs et les actes de ce colloque parisien.

Un colloque qui sera inauguré

mardi par Adnan Bakhit, président de l'université jordanienne Al Bayt, Camille Cabana, président de l'Institut du monde arabe et Riccardo Bocco.

«Quand vous regardez la production en sciences sociales sur la Jordanie, vous remarquez qu'elle est assez limitée. On ne dispose pas d'un ouvrage collectif permettant de faire le point sur le pays dans différents domaines», explique Riccardo Bocco. Un tel ouvrage existe déjà pour l'histoire plus ancienne de la Jordanie, s'intitule «Village, steppe and state. The social origins of modern Jordan. 1850-1950». Co-auteur de ce premier livre, Tareq Tell, participe aujourd'hui aux côtés de Riccardo Bocco à la réalisation du second ouvrage.

L'organisation de la saison jordanienne a donc offert au Cermoc la possibilité d'achever ce projet. Car comme l'explique Riccardo Bocco, «dans la production en sciences sociales sur le Proche-Orient, la Jordanie est un peu un Etat délaissé car jugé artificiel. Or, la stabilité de ce pays est unique dans la région».

Créé voilà bientôt dix ans, le centre jordanien du Cermoc s'intéresse géographiquement à la Jordanie et à la Palestine. Le centre de Beyrouth couvre, lui, le Liban, la Syrie et l'Irak. Depuis un an, le Cermoc d'Amman publie un bulletin semestriel, Jordanian, rassemblant les travaux de différents chercheurs sur la Jordanie et une chronologie précise. Dans le cadre de son programme de recherches sur la Jordanie, il travaille à la réédition en français d'un ouvrage datant du début du siècle écrit par le père dominicain Jaussen, et prépare sa publication en arabe. Enfin, quatre chercheurs s'intéressent actuellement à la ville d'Irbid où ils étudient l'influence de l'urbanisation comme vecteur de nouvelles formes d'intégration.

Par ailleurs, le Cermoc a lancé en décembre dernier un important projet de recherches sur l'UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in Near East) avec 10 chercheurs, 5 Européens et 5 Arabes. Un projet en deux ans qui devrait déboucher sur l'organisation d'un important colloque en 1999 pour les cinquante ans de l'UNRWA.

Olivier Bras

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

Cinéma

Cycle consacré au réalisateur Claude Sautet. Le 23 juin à 20h30 au CCCL. Une histoire simple (1978).

Exposition

Fin aujourd'hui de l'exposition consacrée au CCCL à l'artiste Guy Ferrer (sculptures et tableaux).

Faites de la musique

Pour la traditionnelle fête de la musique qui a lieu chaque année en France, le CCCL vous propose d'embarquer à bord du train du Hedjaz le vendredi 20 juin.

Partant de la gare de Mahata (Amman) à 15h00, ce train fera des escales musicales à Khirbet Assamra et Mafrag. De 15h00 à 22h00, des groupes de musique se produiront lors du voyage et des arrêts.

Les billets sont vendus au prix de 10 JD (voyage+concerts+plateau-repas) au CCCL ou chez Freddy for music.

